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EDICTS OF ASOKA IN MYSORE

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EDICTS OF ASÔKA IN MYSORE.

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LOCALITY.

The Inscriptions of Aśôka lately discovered by me in the Mysore State are three in number, situated on hills on the right and left banks of the Janagi-ha||a or Chinna Hagari river, where it crosses the Moḷakâlmuru Taluq of the Chitaldroog District from west to east. The locality is between 14° 47′ and 14° 51′ north latitude, and about 76° 51′ east longitude. The inscriptions may be named respectively the Brahmagiri, Siddapura, and Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara inscriptions.

The *Brahmagiri inscription* is the best preserved of the three. It is engraved on the top of a great boulder of gneiss, at the north-west base of Brahmagiri, at a point called the Gañjigunṭe mâle, and is the southernmost of the three inscriptions. The boulder is well known throughout the neighbourhood as the *akshara guṇḍu* or "letter rock," and it is supposed to be endowed with medicinal virtues. Accordingly, in various ailments of human beings and in diseases of cattle, the stone is washed and the water used for the purpose is given to the patient to drink. A small irrigation channel runs under the west side, while on the east some rough stone steps have been erected by which to mount on to the stone, as it is a favourite seat for goatherds in the heat of the day when they collect their flocks into the shade of the surrounding rocks, and for ryots watching the crops in the neighbouring fields.

The inscription is cut on the undressed horizontal surface of the rock, which slopes down somewhat at the end of the lines. It consists of thirteen not very regular lines, covering a space of 15′ 6″ by 11′ 6″. Half a dozen letters at the beginning of the 6th and 7th lines have been defaced by the lodgement of water in a depression in the stone. But, with the exception of a few other letters here and there, the remainder is generally in good preservation.

Some measures seem desirable for the future conservation of the stone. There is a large dent near the top on the north side which might lead to the boulder splitting in two. I would suggest that a metal band or chain be put round the boulder, and that it be enclosed in such a way as to prevent its being used as a common seat for the public. A roof might be erected over it, but the pillars supporting the roof should rise from the rock below, as no foundation for them can be found in the stone itself, in which moreover it would be dangerous to make any holes.

Brahmagiri and the plain to the west seem from inscriptions and other evidences to have been in mediæval times the site of a large town, perhaps Jaina, named Hâneya-kôṭe. The hill, which was fortified, was captured in the 12th century by the Hoysaḷa king Vîra-Ballâḷa, who changed its name from Hâneya-kôṭe to Vijayagiri. At the foot of the hill northwards are numerous cromlechs with kistvaens, generally known as *Pâṇḍu-kuḷi*, but which are here called *Môryara mane*, houses of the Môryas or Mauryas, a name I have never heard applied to them anywhere but in this Taluq.

Some years ago a S'ivâchâr Bairâgi settled himself on the hill and acquired a great reputation for sanctity. All the money he obtained by begging and offerings was expended in feeding strangers, especially at the time of an annual festival. For the accommodation of visitors of consequence he erected a three-storeyed house at the top of the hill and furnished it at great expense, partly in the European style. At the time of his death, about four years ago, having no relative, he gave his keys to the principal S'ivâchâr merchant at the neighbouring village of Siddapura, commending him to keep up the establishment. This man, however, has gone to live at Bellary, and is said to have removed and sold for his own benefit every article of value from the house. There are still an old piano by Broadwood, and one or two broken pieces of furniture, with some pictures. The people are most anxious that Government should interfere to prevent the place being dismantled and further injured. The matter might be inquired into.

About three miles to the south of Brahmagiri is a hill called Uchchaṅgi-durga, not to be confounded with the celebrated hill of the same name in the south-west of the Bellary district, just over the Mysore border near Dâvaṇgeri. The Uchchaṅgi-durga near Brahmagiri, it is worthy of note, is said to have been formerly called Hire-Âryana-durga, the hill-fort of the Old Ârya or Âryas. Connected with it westwards is the Nuṅke-Bhairava hill, on which, in a remarkable enclosed valley or ravine, is an ancient temple of that name, served by a succession of Gôsâyins from Northern India. Inscriptions show that the proper name of the god is Luṅkêśvara, and it appears to have been set up

in Śaka 910 by a Kadamba prince and his wife. This is of special interest, as there is reason to believe that a branch of the Kadambas of Banavâsi was settled at Uchchâśṛiṅgi or Uchchaṅgi-durga, hitherto supposed to be the other one above mentioned.

Passing over the crest of the intervening ridge to the south-east, where stood the fortifications of the former chiefs or pallegars, a large circular basin is met with, above the town of Moḷakâlmuru, from which it is separated by a rocky barrier and declivity. The only opening of the basin has been closed with a stone embankment, thus forming a fine tank, which, according to an inscription, was done by the chief of Haṭṭi, now Nâyakanhaṭṭi, in the name of his mother, but he probably only restored an older work. On the north of this valley is the *kâguva-baṇḍe* from which a fine echo is obtained. But the feature specially calling for notice here is a boulder, within the eastern margin of the tank, on which has been drawn the outline of an elephant. As similar representations have been found attached to certain other Aśôka edicts it seems not superfluous to call attention to it although so far away. And further interest attaches to it from a line, in Haḷa-Kannaḍa characters, being inscribed across the legs of the elephant, stated by the engraver to be a *yamaka* verse, and containing the name of Kâḷidâsa. It has probably been incised at a later date than the elephant, and it reads the same forwards or backwards. It has been identified for me by Paṇḍit Râjagôpâlâchârya as a couplet addressed by Bhôja-Râja to Kâḷidâsa on a certain occasion in praise of his poetry, and may be read in various other ways when arranged in *bandhas*. Kâḷidâsa, it is said, immediately retorted with an equally clever verse. The story about it, said to be in the Bhôja-prabandha, is too long to be quoted here, but it is singular, in connection with the remarks on the word farther on, that the circumstance arose out of the queen calling the king a *mûrkha* or fool, whence it would almost seem as if the name Dêvânâmpriya were present to the mind of whoever caused the verse to be engraved in this place.

The *Siddapura inscription* is less than a mile to the west of the Brahmagiri inscription. It is on a ledge, facing south, some way up a rocky group of hills called Yenamana Timmayyana guṇḍlu, or the Buffalo-herd Timmayya's rocks, close to the village of Siddapura. It consists of twenty-two lines, covering a space of 13′ 6″ by 8′, and is engraved in lines of varying length on the sloping and peeling horizontal surface of the rock. A great boulder overhangs the inscription on the north, under the eaves of which the lines end, leaving a very small space between the inscribed floor and the rock above. Considerable portions have been defaced, as the shady ledge on which the inscription is cut forms a favourite shelter for goats and cattle. It is desirable that the place should be fenced round so as to protect the inscription from further injury.

The *Jaṭiṅga[1]-Râmêśvara inscription* is on the western summit of the hill of that name, which is some three miles or more north by west of Brahmagiri. The inscription is cut on a very irregular slanting horizontal surface of rock, facing north-east, which has been quarried at some period. Overhanging the inscription on the south is an immense boulder, which still shows the marks of the mason's punches used in splitting off a considerable portion of its northern face. The floor on which the inscription is cut is immediately in front of the stairs leading up to the Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara temple. Consequently all pilgrims to the shrine walk right over the inscription and have no doubt done so for centuries. Moreover, owing to the convenient shadow of the overhanging boulder, the site of the inscription is the favourite resort of the bangle-sellers at the annual festival. Hence the rock is called the Baḷegâra-guṇḍu or "bangle-sellers' rock," and various holes have been punched in different parts of the rock on which the inscription is cut to receive the posts of the booths or tents erected by them at the annual fair, while the ground around is strewn with bits of broken glass bangles. For the foregoing reasons it is not surprising that the inscription is very greatly defaced, so much so indeed that it is difficult to tell where it begins or where it ends. So far as can be made out it consists of at least twenty-eight lines, covering a space of 17′ 6″ by 6′ 6″. There is a guiding line engraved in the margin to the left, apparently to show the direction of the lines, but those above this mark do not seem to have been parallel with those below it. The letters are not so large as those of the other two inscriptions. Near the beginning of line 18 a small figure of a liṅga has been drawn, which is quite modern. Below the end of the inscription is also a small diagram in squares, such as is used for playing certain games upon. I had a temporary wall of stones put up round the inscription, with thorns on the top, to prevent people walking over it, and made some rough steps at another point, by which they could go up to the temple. Permanent measures should be taken to enclose the inscription and preserve it from further destruction.

[1] Such is the name as now pronounced, but it should perhaps be Jaṭaṅgi. An inscription of the 15th century makes it Jêṭôgi.

The temple of Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara is a very old one and is said to mark the spot where Jaṭâyu fell mortally wounded when attempting to prevent Râvaṇa from carrying off Sîtâ. In confirmation of this story there is among the surrounding inscriptions one in Haḷa-Kannaḍa characters dated in S'aka 883 which says that the Râmaliṅga was set up when Râvaṇa had seized Sîtâ and Jaṭâyu fought and fell in her behalf. Facing the temple is a small shrine to Sûrya or the Sun. The temple and surrounding buildings have an exceedingly weird and hoary appearance owing to the annual coating of white-wash, now some inches thick, given to the exterior, having been allowed to drip and hang all round like a fringe of icicles.

CONTENTS.

Having thus described generally the locality of the inscriptions and their present condition, I now proceed to give an account of their contents. The Brahmagiri and Siddapura inscriptions, it is found, are to a great extent duplicates of one another, but not entirely so, the differences being of considerable importance. So far as can be made out the Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara inscription would appear to be another version of the same, but owing to the extensive loss of letters it is not easy to decide the question. In any case it is not a mere duplicate but presents its own different readings.

After consulting the publications available on the subject, it is clear that the inscriptions now brought to light correspond most nearly with the Three New Edicts of Sahasarâm, Rûpnâth and Bairât, first translated by Dr. Bühler. But there is a continuation or additional Edict which is new, though one phrase in it bears a resemblance to one in the 3rd, 4th and 11th Rock Edicts and the 8th Pillar Edict. The opening clause of the inscriptions, and the concluding direction about the affirmation or oath are entirely new features that do not occur in any other edicts hitherto discovered.

With the assistance of the translations published by Dr. Bühler and M. Senart (the latter through Mr. Grierson's translation from the French) in the *Indian Antiquary*, and General Sir A. Cunningham's volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, I have deciphered and translated them to the best of my ability. I cannot hope that my version is entirely free from errors, or that I have succeeded in clearing up difficulties that are still subjects of discussion among the most eminent scholars, but I have endeavoured to give as accurate and close a rendering as possible of these most ancient and highly interesting records. The accompanying facsimiles, which can be guaranteed as being minutely exact, are intended to facilitate reading, while the photo-lithographs, reduced direct from ink impressions, though unavoidably rough in appearance, will enable scholars to refer to the original text.

As regards the characters in which the inscriptions are engraved, they correspond with those of the southern alphabet used in the Aśôka Edicts discovered in the north of India, except in a few points which may be here noted. The principal difference is in the letter *r*, which here appears as a zigzag descending vertically below the level of the line. In line 9 of the Brahmagiri inscription the upper and lower limbs of the letter *d* are also made in this zigzag manner though everywhere else the letter has a plain straight line above and below according to the usual form of the letter. As no *r* is required to be read there, the object of this formation is not apparent. The vowel *o* when combined with *n*, is written with the stroke to the left horizontal and the stroke to the right sloped obliquely upwards. This seems to be for the purpose of marking the distinction between *nô* and *ṇa*. The vowel *u* when attached to *t* or *y* takes the form of a horizontal stroke carried along the line to the right at the bottom of the letter. In other cases, as with *p* in line 1, it is not a plain straight vertical below the letter but curves up again in a hook to the left. The vowel *e* initial sometimes, as in line 2, consists of only two strokes forming an acute angle to the right instead of three strokes in a triangle. The figure 200, as I presume it is, in line 8 does not exactly resemble the forms hitherto published. At the end of this inscription are a few partly defaced characters which I cannot make out: possibly they contain some word formed from the root *likh*, or they may perhaps be numerals with which I am not acquainted. The same signs apparently mark the conclusion of the Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara inscription. The Siddapura inscription, in addition to the special forms above described, presents us with *ś* and *sh*, the palatal and cerebral sibilants. The Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara inscription has in line 21 a conjunct consonant the subscript member of which is *v*, but the upper member presents a form that does not correspond with that of any letter that will combine with *v*. The latter also is too far below the line to allow of our reading the character as *vai*, say in *vaira*.

Brahmagiri Inscription.

Transcript[1].

[1] tachham nû giritô ayaputasa mahâmâtâṇam cha vachanêna Isilasi mahâmâtâ ârôgiyaṃ vataviyâ hêvaṃ cha vataviyâ Dêvâṇaṃpiyê âṇapayati

[2] adhikâṇi adhâtiyâni vasâni ya hakaṃ [upâsakê] nó tukhâ bâḍhaṃ pakaṃtê husaṃ êkaṃ savachharaṃ sâtirêkê tukhâ saṃvachharaṃ

[3] yaṃ mayâ saṃghê upayîtê bâḍhaṃ chamê pakaṃtê iminâ cha kâlêna amisâ samânâ munisâ Jambu-dipasi

[4] misâ dêvêhi pakamasa hi iyaṃ phalê nó hiyaṃ sakyê mahâptênêva pâpôtavê kâmaṃ tukhê khudakêna pi

[5] paka ghaṭiṇêṇa vipulê svagê sakyê ârâdhêtavê [pi] êtâyaṭhâya iyaṃ sâvaṇê sâvâpitê

[6] [yathâ khudakâ] mahâptâ va imaṃ pakamê[yu ti] aṃtâ cha mê jânêyu chira-ṭhitikê cha iyaṃ

[7] [pakamê hâti] iyaṃ cha aṭhê vaḍhisiti vipulaṃ pi cha vaḍhisiti avarêdhiyâ diyaḍhiyaṃ

[8] vaḍhisiti iyaṃ cha sâvaṇê sâvâpitê vyûthêna 256 sê hêvaṃ Dêvâṇaṃpiyê

[9] âha mâtâ-pitisu susûsâ taviyê hêmêva garva tapâṇêsu dahyitavyaṃ sachaṃ

[10] vataviyaṃ sê imê dhaṃma-guṇâ pavatitaviyâ hêmêva aṃtêvâsinâ

[11] âchariyê apachâyitaviyê ñâtikêsu chakaṃ ya ....raham pavatitaviyê

[12] êsâ pôrâṇaṃ paṃkiti dighâvusê cha êsa hêvaṃ êsa kaṭaviyê

[13] chapaḍêna likhit ..... ? ?

In Sanskrit[2].

tathyaṃ nu gîryatê âryaputrasya mahâmâtrâṇâṃ cha vachanêna | Isilê mahâmâtrâḥ ârôgyaṃ vaktavyâḥ êvaṃ cha vaktavyâḥ | Dêvânâṃpriyaḥ âjñâpayati | adhikâni ardha-tṛitîyâni varshâṇi yad aham upâsakaḥ nó duḥkhaṃ bâḍhaṃ prakrântaḥ abhûvaṃ | êkaṃ saṃvatsaraṃ sâtirêkaṃ duḥkhaṃ | saṃvatsaraṃ yaṃ mayâ saṅghaḥ upayâtaḥ bâḍhaṃ śramaḥ prakrântaḥ | anêna cha kâlêna amṛishâ samânâḥ manushyâḥ Jambu-dvipê mṛishâ dêvaiḥ | prakramasya hi idaṃ phalaṃ | nô hi idaṃ śakyaṃ | mahâptênêva prâptavyaṃ kâmaṃ duḥkhaṃ | kshudrakêna api pakva-ghaṭanêna vipulaḥ svargaḥ śakyaḥ ârâdhitavyaḥ api | êtasmai arthâya idaṃ śravaṇaṃ śrâvâpitaṃ | yathâ kshudrakâḥ mahâptâḥ vâ imaṃ prakramishyanti | antâḥ cha imê jânantu | chira-sthitikaḥ cha ayaṃ prakramaḥ bhavati | ayaṃ cha arthaḥ vardhishyati | vipulam api cha vardhishyati | avarârdhyaṃ dvyardhyaṃ vardhishyati | idaṃ cha śravaṇaṃ śrâvâpitaṃ vyûthêna 256 śaḥ || êvaṃ Dêvânâṃpriyaḥ âha | mâtâ-pitṛishu śuśrûshâ (kar)tavyâ | êvam êva garvaṃ tapanêshu dahyitavyaṃ | satyaṃ vaktavyaṃ | tê imê dharma-guṇâḥ pravartitavyâḥ | êvam êva antêvâsinâ âchâryaḥ apachâyitavyaḥ | jñâtikêshu ..... pravartitavyaḥ | êshâ paurâṇâṃ paṅktî dîrghâyushî cha | êshaḥ êvaṃ | êshaḥ kartavyaḥ | śapathêna likhita .....

[1] The words and letters in brackets are supplied from the Sâhâsaṛa inscription.

[2] The original contains no breaks or stops anywhere, except a vertical stroke at the end. The stops therefore here shown are arbitrary, and have been put in to indicate the division into sentences made by me. The Sanskrit is merely given word for word, without the changes required in composition.

BRAHMAGIRI INSCRIPTION

SIZE OF ORIGINAL 15.6" × 11.6"

Translation.

Truth indeed is made known by the word of the Âryaputra[1] and the mahâmâtras.

The mahâmâtras in Isila[2] will be informed of (our) health, and will be informed as follows :—

The Beloved of the gods (thus) commands.—For more than two years and a half[3] when I was an *upâsaka* (or lay-disciple) I did not take much trouble. For one year (I took) excessive trouble; the year when I went to the *saṅgha* (or assembly of clerics) I put forth great exertion. And in this time the men who were really equal to gods in Jambu-dvîpa (were proved to be) falsely (so regarded).[4] This indeed is the fruit of action (or zeal). But it is not by might. Even by the most favoured it is attained only with trouble. Yet to the lowly by perfect effort high heaven is possible and may be attained. With this aim has this exhortation[5] been delivered[6],—in order that whether lowly or favoured they should in this manner exert themselves: and that the neighbouring countries may know this: and that this exertion should be of long continuance. Then will this aim increase; it will increase greatly; it will increase exceedingly, infinitely. And this exhortation has been delivered by the *vyûṭha* (or ? society) 256 times.[7]

Thus says the Beloved of the gods[8] :—Obedience should be shown to mothers and fathers. So also pride should be burnt in the flames. Truth should be spoken. These and the like virtuous qualities should be practised. So also the religious teacher should be reverenced by the disciple. ..... should be practised to kindred. Which will also be for long life to the people of this city.

This is so. Thus should it be done. With the affirmation let it be written .....

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[1] The Âryaputra here evidently fills the place of the Kumâlê (=kumârâh) in the second separate edict of Dhauli.

[2] As no other way of interpreting this word could be found, it has been taken as a proper name. In the grant of Dadda II. (*Ind. Ant.* xvii, 184) a town named Isi is mentioned as being in Gujarat.

[3] Dr. Bühler translates the parallel passage as "thirty-two years and a half:" M. Senart has "two years and a half." I have followed authority in taking the expression to mean two years and a half, but there are not wanting grounds for making it one year and a half if necessary.

[4] The parallel passages to this difficult sentence, which are somewhat differently expressed at Sahasaram and Rupnath, have been thus interpreted :—

Sahasaram: (Dr. Bühler) "During this interval those gods that were (held to be) true gods in Jambu-dvîpa have been made (to be regarded as) men and false." (M. Senart) "During this period the men who were the real gods of Jambu-dvîpa have been reduced to be no longer really the gods."

Rupnath: (Dr. Bühler) "Those gods who during this time were considered to be true (gods) in Jambu-dvîpa have now been abjured." (M. Senart) "Those who at that time were the real gods of Jambu-dvîpa are now reduced to be really no no longer."

[5] Dr. Bühler translates the word by "sermon."

[6] The form *sañâpite* used here and lower down seems unusual. The Siddapura description has the more common form *âṇavite*. Sahasaram has no equivalent word in this place. Rupnath has *kaṭe* instead.

[7] This is another most difficult passage, and has been translated thus in the differing versions of Sahasaram and Rupnath.

Sahasaram: (Dr. Bühler) "And this sermon (is) by the Departed (i. e. Buddha). Two hundred (years) exceeded by fifty-six, 256, have passed since." (M. Senart) "It is by the missionary that this teaching is spread abroad. Two hundred and fifty-six men have been sent forth on mission, 256."

Rupnath: (Dr. Bühler) "This sermon has been preached by the Departed, 256 years have elapsed since the departure of the Teacher." (M. Senart) "It is through the missionary that my teaching is spread abroad. There have been 256 settings forth of missionaries."

Dr. Oldenberg lays down the following as the exact translations, whatever the words left in the original may be found to mean.

Sahasaram: "256 *satas* are *vivuthas*." *Rupnath*: "there are 256 *vivâsas* of the *sata*."

[8] This formula, with which most of the Edicts are introduced, recalls the similar one in the famous Persian inscription of Darius Hystaspes of 516 B.C. at Behistun, every section of which commences with, "Says Darius the king."

Siddapura Inscription.

Transcript[1].

1 śivaṃ ṇa girîtê ayaputasa mahâmâtâ-

2 ṇaṃ cha vachanêna Isilasi mahâmâtâ

3 ârôgiyaṃ vatavi[yâ] Dêvânaṃpiyê hêvaṃ

4 âha adhikâni a[ḍhâti]yâ[ni] vasâni

5 ya pa[kaṃ]upâsakê nô tukhâ bâḍha pakaṃtê husaṃ êkaṃ savachha-

6 raṃ [sâtirê]kê tukhâ saṃvachharaṃ yaṃ [mayâ saṃ]ghê upayitê bâḍhaṃ

7 cha[mê] pa[kaṃ]te iminâ cha kâlêna amisâ samâ[nâ] mu-

8 [nisâ] Jaṃbu-dî[?pê] misâ dêvêhi pakamasa hi iyaṃ phalê nô hi i-

9 yaṃ sakê [mahâptênê]va pâpôtavê kâmaṃ tukhâ khudakêna

10 pi [paka ghaṭiṇê]na [vipulê] svagê sakê ârâdhêtavê

11 pi [êtâyaṭhâ]ya [iyaṃ] sâvaṇê sâvitê yathâ khu-

12 da[kâ ma]hâptâ va imaṃ pakamêyu ti amtâ cha-

13 [mê janêyu chira]-thitikê cha iyaṃ pakamê hâti

14 [iyaṃ cha aṭhê] vaḍhisiti vipulaṃ pi cha vaḍhisiti a-

15 [varêdhiyâ diyaḍhi]yaṃ vaḍhisiti iyam cha sâvaṇê

16 ..... maṭha ..... taviyê·

17 [ga]rvaṃ dahyitavyaṃ shachhaṃ vataviyê imê dhamma-gu

18 ..... êsâ ñâ ..... âchariyê apachâyitaviyê su

19 âchariya ..... ti dighâvusi cha hêmêva ..... aṃtêvâsinê cha

20 ..... rahiṃ pavatitavi[yê] ..... ma

21 .... sa tathâ kaṭaviye chapa ..

22 .. la .... ha .... ya ....

Owing to this inscription being to so great an extent the same as the Brahmagiri inscription, it is unnecessary to repeat the translation. The principal difference between the two in the first part is in the opening words, (which are here "Blessing is made known to us"), in the omission of certain repetitions of no importance, and in the name *Jambu-dipê* being given apparently with its Sanskrit termination instead of the Prâkṛit, as there is room for only one letter after *dî*. The closing statement of this part, introducing the numerals 256, seems to be wanting. The second part evidently corresponds in a general way with that of the Brahmagiri inscription, but several of the phrases are introduced in a different order. If there be any new ones, which is difficult to decide owing to the loss of letters, they are evidently of the same character as those which occur in the Brahmagiri inscription. The two inscriptions however, through so closely resembling one another, have enabled the *lacunæ* in one to be filled up from the undefaced letters of the other, thus providing a pretty complete copy of the whole of the first edict.

[1] The words and letters in brakets are supplied from the Brahmagiri inscription.

SIDDAPURA INSCRIPTION

SIZE OF ORIGINAL 13' 6" × 8'.

JATINGA-RAMESVARA INSCRIPTION

SIZE OF ORIGINAL 17.6×6.6"

Jatinga-Râmeśvara Inscription.

Transcript.

1 â. . . . . .

2 . . . . . .

3 . . . . . la . . .

4 . . . . . .

5 . . . . . .

6 . . vacha . . . . . .

7 śila . . . . . na . . . . . .

8 . . . . . taviyâ Dêvâna . . . . . .

9 . . . . . kha bâḍha . . . . . ya hasaṃ . . . . . .

10 . . . . . yê . . . . . ti . . . . . .

11 . . . . na . . . . . ni . . . . . .

12 . . . . . kaṃ . . . . . chha . . . . . .

13 . . . . . .

14 . . . . . .

15 . . . . . cha . . . . . .

16 . . . . . la . . . . . sa . . . .

17 . . . . . pulaṃ pi . . . . . yaḍhiyaṃ . . . . . .

18 . . . . . thêna 256 hêmêva . . . .

19 . . . . . tâ pitisu . . . . . sitaviyê hêmêva . . . . . âṇêsa

20 . . . . hyitavyaṃ sachaṃ vataviyê . . imê . . . . . .

21 . . . . hêvaṃ pâvatitaviyâ . . . . . na tê . . . . . tavi . . . . . .

22 . . . . . taviyê hêmêva âchariyê antêvâsina . . . . . .

23 . . . . . ṇâ paki . . . . . sitaviyê . . . . . .

24 . . . . . yaṃ . . . . âchariyaê ñâtikâ tê . . . . ya . . . . . .

25 . . . . . titaviyê êsâ . . ra . . paṅkiti digha . . . . . chu hêmêva ê . .

26 . . . . . vati . . . . . hêvaṃ . . . . . Dêvâṇaṃpiyê

27 . . . . . kaṭaviyê . . paḍêna li . . . . . laṃ . . . . . .

28 . . . . . ? ?

This inscription is so greatly defaced that it is impossible to decide to what extent it originally differed from the others. The opening portion seems to correspond with that of the other two, except that the commencement of the prefatory sentence is apparently wanting. The numerals 256 with [*vyū*]*thêna* re-appear, but the context is too much defaced to add any fresh information regarding them. A consideration of the words which can be deciphered towards the end seems to indicate that the precepts which form the second part of the other two inscriptions are here introduced in a different order and with some additions. Moreover, from the occurrence of the name *Dêvâṇaṃpiyê* in line 26, it would appear that it was at that point different from the other inscriptions, though it concludes like the Brahmagiri inscription with the reference to the affirmation. The final characters resemble those of the Brahmagiri inscription which have not been deciphered. The form *âchariyaê* in line 22 is deserving of notice.

GENERAL REMARKS.

A variety of considerations of the greatest interest arise in connection with these inscriptions and the locality in which they have been found. But in the present Report it will be sufficient to state briefly that the date of the inscriptions is the third century, probably 258, B.C., and that they are examples of the most ancient specimens of writing that have been discovered in India.

Dêvânampiyê (=Dêvânâmpriyah) was a royal title borne by the Maurya kings. It is sometimes used alone but more often in conjunction with the king's name. It thus occurs as an epithet of Piyadasi and of Dasaratha his grandson. The present inscriptions are undoubtedly edicts of Piyadasi (=Priyadarśi), who, by the testimony of Buddhist writings in Ceylon and Burma, and still more by his own references to contemporary Greek kings, is proved to be identical with Aśôka or Dharmâśôka, the third king of the Maurya dynasty of Pâṭaliputra in Magadha, (the modern Patna, on the Ganges), and the grandson of Chandragupta, the Sandrakoptos of the Greek historians.

The dominions of Aśôka, as determined by his mention of the border nations, embraced the whole of Northern India and southwards to the central plateau of the Dekhan. The present inscriptions are evidence that it extended farther to the south than has been hitherto supposed, for none of these edicts has been found before south of Kathiâwâḍ and Orissa.

The circumstances in the king's history which are referred to in the present inscriptions are considered to be,—his first conversion to Buddhism, and his subsequent more public profession of it, with the efforts that followed for disseminating its humanitarian principles.

The former of these events the king informs us, in the 13th Rock Edict, was due to the remorse he felt on account of the slaughter and devastation that attended his conquest of Kaliṅga. Henceforward he resolved to maintain peace and devote himself to religion. That conquest, as he tells us, was in the 9th year after his coronation, which therefore is the period of his first conversion. But according to our present inscriptions, as well as those of Sahasarâm and Rûpnâth, he took no trouble, otherwise he displayed no special zeal, in regard to religion, during the time that he was an *upâsaka* or lay-disciple, that is for more than two years and a half. This would bring us towards the end of the 11th year after his coronation, which is given in the 8th Edict as the period of his conversion. The latter date must refer to the second occasion, when, as stated in our inscriptions, he went to the *saṅgha*, or assembly of clerics. The allusion would appear to be to the State visit which, according to the chronicles, he paid to the Saṅgha, in the midst of which he took his seat. It was at this time that he caused his son Mahinda and his daughter Saṅghamittâ to enter into the religious order. Our inscriptions therefore, in common with those of Sahasarâm and Rûpnâth as interpreted by M. Senart, reconcile the two dates.

We are further informed that for a year or perhaps more the king was very zealously occupied in religious matters, on the result of which he seems to dwell with much satisfaction, urging his example as an encouragement to zeal in all whether high or low. This would bring us into the 13th year after his coronation, which was the period, according to the 6th Pillar Edict, at which he began to have his edicts engraved on rocks throughout the country. All the edicts hitherto discovered fall into two groups, the Rock Edicts belonging to the 13th and 14th years after the king's coronation, and the Pillar Edicts to the 27th and 28th years. The only other date we have of the time of this king is the dedication of the Barabar cave in the 20th year. The Sahasarâm, Rûpnâth and Bairât inscriptions M. Senart considers precede them all, though still, for the reasons above given, belonging to the 13th year. It follows that the inscriptions now discovered are equal in age to the most ancient inscriptions known in India.

We may now return to inquire what was the fruit of the king's special exertions in the year or more that he visited the Saṅgha. The result claimed to have been accomplished has been given in the translations, together with the versions of Dr. Bûhler and M. Senart. But, after all, it must be confessed that the information supplied us by the inscriptions on this point is anything but clear. That the king's conversion was to Buddhism there can be no doubt. Previous to this change of faith he was in the opinion of some a Jaina, but according to most he held the creed of the Brahmans. His grandson Samprati at any rate became a Jaina, and there may be some confusion between this name and that of Sampâti, the brother of Jaṭâyu, who is connected in some of the local stories with the Jaṭiṅga-Râmêśvara hill. Aśôka now signalized his conversion not by persecution of his former co-religionists but by inducing a revolution throughout India in the public estimation of them. There seems to be much probability in the opinion that his statement indicates a setting aside of false and extravagant

pretensions on the part of the priesthood, or, as stated by M. Senart, "after his conversion the king proceeded to deprive the Brahmans of that almost divine prestige which they enjoyed throughout the whole of India." In short, the members of the Saṅgha no doubt took advantage of the king's presence and adhesion to influence him to depose their rivals, whether Brahmans or Jains, from their former pre-eminence. This action of his does not invalidate the express injunctions to toleration contained in so many of his edicts, wherein he inculcates more than once the duty of reverence to and the bestowal of alms upon both Brâhmaṇas and S'ramaṇas. On the other hand it would be strange if no trace whatever could be discovered of the resentment which would naturally be evoked by so powerful though silent and peaceful a revolution in time-honoured beliefs. And we may perhaps find a trace in the fact that Dêvânâmpriyaḥ, as one word, is explained by Kâtyâyana in the Vârttikas to Pâṇini as synonymous with *mûrkha*, a fool! This was a very characteristic retaliation, if so meant, and the use of the word thus authorized has come down even to the present time and is common, so I am told, at all events among the Brahmans.

The versions which have been given in relation to the significance of the numerals 256 will show that we are not yet in possession of sufficient evidence to determine exactly how they are to be understood. They do not, however, whether embodying a date or not, affect the accuracy of the dates otherwise assigned to Aśôka, which are sufficiently established.

Previous to the present discovery the only indication we had of any connection between Aśôka and Mysore was in the statement in the 12th chapter of the *Mahawanso* that on the despatch of missionaries to foreign parts, after the third convocation, for the establishment of the religion of Buddha, the *thêra* (*-sthâvira*) Mahâdêva was deputed to Mahisa-maṇḍala, and the thêra Rakkhita to Vanavâsi. The latter place is well known as the old Kadamba capital situated on the north-west border of Mysore in North Kanara. It is mentioned by Ptolemy under the same name in the 2nd century A.D. The occurrence of it next to Mahisa-maṇḍala seems to justify the opinion that the latter name may indicate the Mysore, literally the Mahishûru, from Mahishâsura, country. Or, in view of its being included in one sentence with the despatch of the thêra Majjhantika to Kasmîra-Gandhâra, we may perhaps take the countries named as indicating the extreme limits north and south of Aśôka's dominions.

Isila, the name of the city mentioned in our inscriptions, if it has been rightly so interpreted, and the reference at the end to "the people of this city" would seem to support the interpretation, does not exactly correspond with any known name. The first part *isi* would represent *rishi*, but this does not help us. If Isila may stand for Vrishala, this is a name of Chandragupta, of whose connection with Mysore we have many reminiscences in inscriptions. And a still further testimony may perhaps be found in the discovery a few years ago of leaden Buddhist coins on the site of an ancient city near Chitaldroog, said to have been called Chandrâvali.

The important lessons which the king seeks to impress upon all in the present inscriptions may perhaps be shortly summed up as follows:—That to secure the fruits of religion human intervention is of no avail; there must be personal effort, and it must be earnest and persevering. Combined with this there must be rectitude of conduct, and consideration for the feelings of others in all our relations to our fellowmen.

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